

Artist finds a way

Veteran learns to paint left-handed after a stroke

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POCATELLO — When Max Quigley retired from his job at the Idaho National Laboratory after 35 years, he was allowed to indulge full-time in his passion for painting.

Max and his wife, Donna, moved from Idaho Falls to Virginia City, Mont., a place they had grown to love after frequent visits.

"We had been going up there for years to the arts festival. We just liked the place," he said.

The fates were unkind to Max. In 1997, two years after his retirement, he was felled by a massive stroke. He spent a year just trying to relearn how to walk. His right leg and arm still sport braces and are mostly inert.

Max had always been artistic.

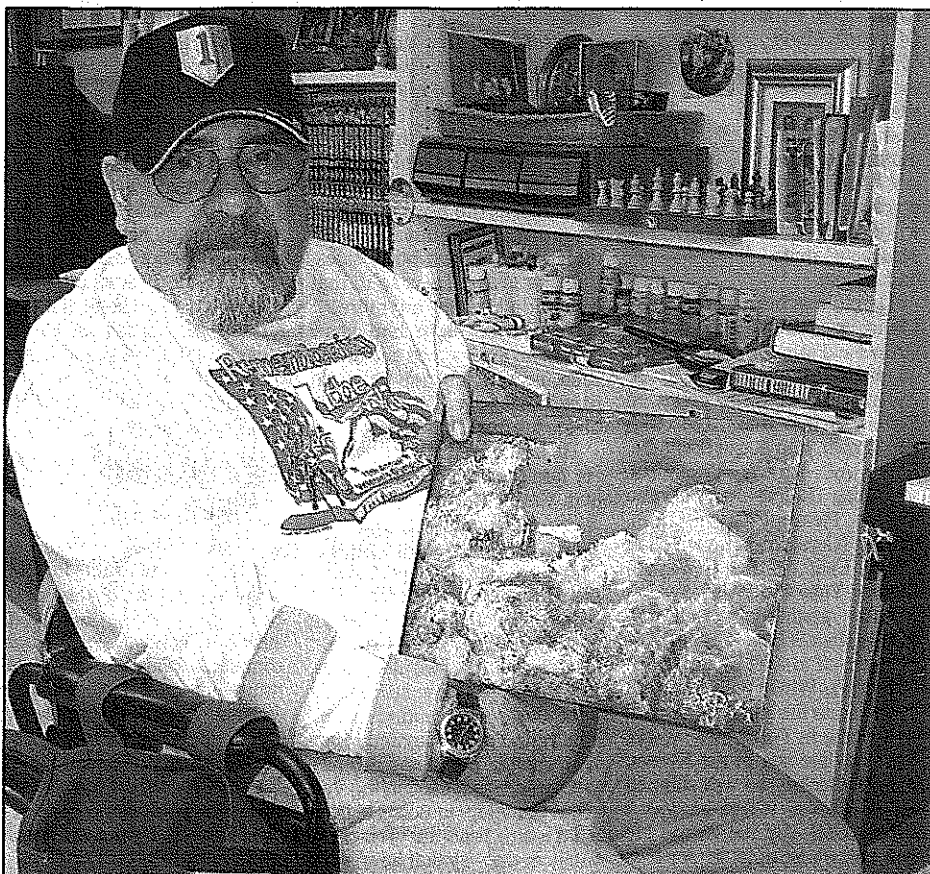
"I'd always kind of doodled around with pen and ink," he said.

In 1985, Max took an art class in Idaho Falls. He was hooked. His new medium of choice was oils.

"I really liked it," he said.

The loss of function of his right side effectively doomed his ability to participate in his painting hobby. In 1996, the daily rigors of care and advancing age necessitated that Max, a U.S. Army veteran, move to the Idaho State Veterans Home in Pocatello.

"My wife really couldn't take care of me," he said.



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Max Quigley, a resident of the Idaho State Veterans Home in Pocatello, displays one of his watercolors. Quigley, who had to learn to paint left-handed after a stroke, recently had six of his works displayed at the Marshall Public Library in Pocatello.

FACES OF IDAHO

MAX QUIGLEY

- U.S. Army veteran.
- Retired Idaho National Laboratory employee.
- Learned to paint with his left hand after a stroke.

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said. "I seem to do better on boards."

The walls of his room are adorned with numerous canvases. They include seascapes, one with a surfer riding a mean curl. Another portrays a lighthouse under siege by high seas. There are numerous landscapes of mountains which bear resemblance to the sharp relief of the Tetons. Max also has works crafted in pencil, pen and ink and

acrylics. The pictures alternate between crisp portrayals to more flowing works in his watercolors.

Donna now lives in Boise, close to her children. She visits Max regularly. In the meantime, Max fills his time plying his renewed love of painting. Six of his works have been on display at the Marshall Public Library.

Despite his disability, there is no question of what's being portrayed in his paintings, although he decided to forego portraits after they failed to turn out to his standards.

"I'm not much into abstracts," Max said.

took to it like a duck to ... well, water.

"I tried it on paper," he

Sometime after his arrival, a staff member coaxed him to try to take up a brush again.

"I didn't even attempt anything for 10 years until I got in here," he said. "The activities director pushed me into it, which I'm glad she did."

Quigley figured that oils were probably too messy, given he would be using his non-dominant hand. He chose watercolor as his new medium, an ironic choice given its unforgiving nature compared to oils.

"It was (hard), but I'd never done it before," Max said, explaining he liked the challenge. He

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